



nuclear
information
service

2012 ANNUAL REPORT



Over the course of the year 2012 Nuclear Information Service (NIS) has continued with its work on monitoring and reporting the costs and risks of the UK's nuclear weapons programme. Safety issues at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) nuclear weapons complex at Aldermaston and Burghfield in Berkshire have had a high profile following the news that AWE was to be prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive following the August 2010 fire in an explosives facility at Aldermaston. We also commissioned a report from Large & Associates nuclear consulting engineers into the adequacy of emergency planning arrangements at AWE, and arranged meetings between local councillors and officers and report author John Large to discuss concerns identified in the report.

CHAIR'S REPORT

NIS supports the principles of openness, accountability, and public right-to-know in relation to operations at nuclear sites, and during the year we published a detailed report into the working of the AWE Local Liaison Committee - a group of local council members responsible for representing the views of local communities to the AWE site operators. Our report made a number of recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the Committee's work, and in response to our report AWE are reviewing the Committee's work.

We continue to support organisations such as Nukewatch, Solent Coalition Against Nuclear Ships, Nuclear Awareness Group and the Nuclear Submarine Forum, and in return the observations and information which they pass on to us is vital in allowing us to report on the status of the UK's military nuclear programmes. We have also submitted a number of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act and assisted Members of Parliament in drafting Parliamentary Questions to aid in research on nuclear issues.

During the year NIS Board and Staff members forged stronger teamwork skills and prepared a strategic plan for the next five years at an away-day with an overnight stay at Braziers Park. We identified our strengths and weaknesses with the help of an evaluation study and a thorough survey of our stakeholders conducted by Henrietta Wilson, which has helped us to plan new work priorities and set good governance objectives.

As always, we are grateful for the generous support of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust both in funding our core costs and for their advice, and to all our many supporters for their interest in and appreciation of our work during 2012.

Di McDonald,
Chair, Nuclear Information Service
Board of Directors

REVIEW OF THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

MONITORING THE AWE

One of the main areas of NIS's work is observing and reporting on developments at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and its sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield, where the UK's nuclear weapons are designed and made. In 2012 we published the results of a research study, undertaken on our behalf by consultants Large & Associates, on emergency planning arrangements at AWE sites. The report raised a number of questions about the adequacy of emergency planning at nuclear sites which we are continuing to pursue with the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

We also published 'Opening the Gates', a report on standards of community liaison at AWE which made a number of suggestions for improvements in the way the AWE Local Liaison Committee operates. To help build bridges with the Local Liaison Committee, we organised a briefing for members in June to discuss the 'Opening the Gates' report, and the Large & Associates emergency planning study.

At the beginning of the year, in collaboration with Scientists for Global Responsibility and Medact, we began work on a project to investigate AWE's links with UK universities. Good progress was made with research work and the project report will be published later in 2013.

TRIDENT AND THE UK'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAMME

During 2012 we continued to highlight the risks and costs of the UK's nuclear weapons programme. We published our version of the Ministry of Defence risk register for the Trident programme (based on information received from a request made under the Freedom of Information Act) and submitted the register as evidence to the BASIC Trident Commission. An article prepared by NIS on the risks of the UK's nuclear weapons programme was also included in the tenth Blackaby Paper, 'Nuclear weapons: historical perspective and modern dangers' published by Abolition 2000.

To mark the 60th anniversary of the UK's first atomic bomb test, we developed and published an interactive internet timeline presenting the history of the UK nuclear weapons programme, which was acclaimed by both academic historians and campaigners.

WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS

During the year NIS once again provided support and assistance to other non-government organisations with similar aims to ours - Nukewatch, the Nuclear Submarine Forum, Solent Coalition against Nuclear Ships, and the Reading-based Nuclear Awareness Group (NAG).

We helped NAG to organise a public meeting on emergency planning for the Atomic Weapons Establishment, with guest speaker John Large of Large & Associates presenting the findings of the research study he undertook for NIS, and we also provided technical advice to NAG in support of their objection to a planning application for construction of a Technology Development Centre at AWE Aldermaston - part of a joint UK-France warhead physics research programme.

During the year Nukewatch continued their work to monitor movements of UK nuclear weapons, tracking warhead convoys in January, March, October and November. NIS assisted in monitoring and reporting on convoy movements and preparing Freedom of Information requests about nuclear transport.



Evaluation and planning workshop

NIS'S YEAR IN NUMBERS

30,711 Website page views

660 Email subscribers

400 Tweets

290 Twitter followers

160 Facebook followers

58 Stakeholder responses to our evaluation study

40 Parliamentary Questions drafted in assistance to MPs

39 Freedom of Information requests

10 Editions of our NIS Update newsletter

10 Blog postings

5 Presentations to local groups

DEVELOPING NIS AS AN ORGANISATION

Over the summer we undertook a major evaluation study of our work to help set our objectives and strategy for the next five years, and asked over 50 of our stakeholders for their views on our work. Feedback was generally positive, although the survey indicated that NIS needs to develop a more diverse funding base, be aware of the risks of over-stretching staff, and better articulate our aims and principles. Work is underway to make improvements in these areas.

We also completely rebuilt our website to give it a more professional look and add new features, and relaunched it in the autumn.

During the year we said goodbye to Steve Hendry, our Technical Assistant, and welcomed Deborah Wilson to NIS to take over the role. Tim Street spent six months with us before moving to Warwick University to begin a research studentship on disarmament and non-proliferation, and we are grateful to Chris Burden, Vinatha Prakash, and Andrew Urbanski for giving us their services as volunteers during the year.

REACHING OUT

NIS regularly enters into dialogue with government bodies, regulators, and nuclear industry stakeholders with the aim of advancing

openness and transparency in the nuclear sector. We continue to be an enthusiastic participant in the Office for Nuclear Regulation's NGO Forum, and during 2012 also met with ONR site inspectors for the Atomic Weapons Establishment.

We attended the Ministry of Defence Submarine Dismantling National Consultation Meeting in Birmingham in January and submitted a detailed response to the MoD's consultation on submarine dismantling, and also submitted evidence to the BASIC Trident Commission on alternatives to replacing Trident and to the House of Commons Justice Select Committee on the effectiveness of the Freedom of Information Act.



Nuclear Information Service staff and volunteers 2012

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2012

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2012	2011
Incoming resources				
Grants	-	48,730	48,730	52,414
Donations	1,525	-	1,525	649
Payments for services	220	-	220	469
	1,745	48,730	50,475	53,532
Resources expended				
Staff fees	150	38,163	38,313	34,134
Travel	65	1,089	1,154	864
Office costs	30	6,710	6,740	14,115
Projects	576	1,161	1,737	209
	821	47,123	47,944	49,322
Net movement in funds before interest and tax	924	1,607	2,531	4,210
Investment income	354	-	354	231
Taxation	(71)	-	(71)	(47)
Net movement in funds	1,207	1,607	2,814	4,394
Balances brought forward at 1 January	347	37,681	38,028	33,634
Balances carried forward at 31 December	1,554	39,288	40,842	38,028

NIS's finances remained in good health over the year thanks largely to grant funding we received from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT). The trust is continuing to support our work during 2013.

BALANCE SHEET

	£	£
	2012	2011
Current assets		
Bank accounts - current	11,068	17,907
- deposit	35,397	30,080
Cash in hand	82	113
	46,547	48,100
Debtors	-	-
	46,547	48,100
Current liabilities		
Accruals	(5,634)	(10,025)
Creditors	(71)	(47)
Net current assets	40,842	38,028
Funds		
Unrestricted funds	1,554	347
Restricted funds	39,288	37,681
Total funds	40,842	38,028

Note: Restricted funds support NIS's educational goals and are supported through grant funding. Unrestricted funds are spent on work which may not qualify as meeting charitable aims.

Nuclear Information Service is a not-for-profit, non-government information service which works to promote public awareness and debate on nuclear weapons and related safety and environmental issues.

We are grateful for the generous support extended to us by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust in providing our core funding, and to the Marmot Trust and the Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation who provided funding for project work during 2012.

We rely on donations for project work and legal costs. If you would like to help support NIS you can donate online via our PayPal account at <http://nuclearinfo.org>.

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